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## Policy

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# Fair could have been run safely

WELL over 300 years of tradition is ended with the court ruling that the annual sale of horses by and to travellers, mostly Romany, may never be held again.

There must be legal reasons why this decision has been upheld and supported by the home secretary.

But could the fair have been continued safely if sufficient resources were made available to ensure residents had the full protection of the law and visitors had adequate toilet and washing facilities?

The arguments point to a local council and police force with inadequate resources to host this event in a proper manner.

The threatened demonstrations by the traditional participants of the horse fair will certainly cost more than if the event had been allowed to proceed with adequate support.

KEITH BROWN  
Cranbrook Road  
Hawkhurst

## Merry meet

HORSMONDEN'S fair was older than English "riding to hounds" in its modern form.

Gypsies have held their annual fair for trade and sports through all the 400-odd years, they have lived in this country.

Why did the Country-side Alliance not speak out against the dull cohorts of the management society, and oppose all those in councils and elsewhere, who took away the rights of an ethnic group, because it so clearly represented Merry England and not Middle England?

JONATHAN PARSONS  
Roper's Gate  
Tunbridge Well

## Policing

THE EVENTS in Horsmonden last Sunday were at once farcical and disturbing.

The annual gypsy Horsemaif was originally cancelled by the local council because of the expense of policing it. This has now been changed by certain "arrivistes" on the council to "for health and safety reasons".

Nobody - neither villagers nor gypsies were consulted prior to this action. The applause for the Romanys from the villagers on Sunday and the fact that many of the latter chose to join the march showed that a considerable majority of people in Horsmonden were not in favour of the ban.

The farcical element of the affair was provided by the police who were present in such numbers (it would be interesting to know the official figure) that they might have been providing security for a G7 summit meeting.

Of rather more concern was the fact that villagers were banned from their own Green from Friday evening until Monday morning under threat of being "dealt with accordingly". This draconian and unnecessary measure resulted from consultation with Jack Straw - who else! In addition, the police interrogation of people arriving in the village that day was outrageous - at least one woman was asked for details of her annual income!

The behaviour of the Romanys was, throughout, admirably digni-

## Viewpoint



CHURCH LANE: Tonbridge Camera Club member Alan Young of Dene Park, Tonbridge took this picture in historic Hadlow. Camera: Yashicamat with yellow filter. Film: 120 FPA

EVERY week in Viewpoint the Courier will publish a picture from Kent and Sussex taken by a reader. It could be a rural view or any other picture which is special to you.

If you have a picture you would like to be considered for inclusion, send the print to The Editor, Courier Newspapers, Longfield Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 3HL. Please give details of when and where the picture was taken and details of the equipment you used.

fied. It is hoped the council and those members who saw fit to impose this undemocratic ban will now see sense - or the people of Horsmonden can look forward to repeats of the whole sorry performance for years to come.

ROBIN BELLINGER  
Maidstone Road,  
Horsmonden

## Exam marks

HAVING just taken my GCSEs at Tonbridge Grammar School for Girls and taken extra exams and taken some early I class real success not as A\*s but perhaps Bs if you were expecting less or Cs in a subject you struggled in.

Real success comes from creating a happy environment for the students to learn in and encouragement of all students.

It's a pity league-tables can't show the important side to a school.

For example, how happy the students are there or how much time is spent not doing school-work but developing the individual.

I found no advantage in taking GCSEs early. All it achieved was putting me under extra pressure to make the school look good.

My happiness and opinions did not matter.

Of course the schools want to look good so they will get a good intake but I hope parents

look for more than grades in a school.

I believe that we must judge personal success.

Not everyone can achieve A\*s. We have talents in different areas. So then I ask, why do the people achieving better grades than they expected not get mentioned in the newspapers because they did not get any A\*s? Don't those people show success too?

What about schools who may not have the highest exam grades but have had outstanding success in drama or sport? Does this not class the school as successful?

HANNAH FLYNN  
Elmhurst Avenue  
Pembury

## LATE CHEMISTS

Paddock Wood. P.J. & R. Martel, 12 Commercial Road: Mon to Fri (except Wed) 6.30. Wed 9am-1pm, 2-6pm. Sat 5pm.

Tunbridge Wells. Safeway Pharmacy, Vale Road: Mon to Wed 8pm, Thur & Fri 9pm, Sat until 8pm. Carrs

Sun 10am-12noon. Godkins, 5 High Street: Mon-Sat 6pm. Aumex, 106 Greggwood Road: 6pm, Sat 5pm. Watson Pharmacy, 3 & 5 Quarry Road: Mon to Sat 6pm.

Tonbridge. Castle Pharmacy, 119A High Street: Mon-Fri 5.30pm, Sat until 1pm. Clarke & Coleman, 140 High Street: Mon to Fri until 7pm, Sat until 5.30pm.

5.30pm. Quarry Hill Pharmacy, 25 Quarry Hill Road, Sunday 11am-12noon.

DENTAL SERVICE  
Tunbridge Wells Dental  
Kest. FUGA

Sussex Hospital's Dental Unit. Daily 7-10.30pm. Saturday and Sunday 9.30am-12 noon. Telephone 01892 517771.

## TIDE TABLE

Fri 00.34, 12.52; Sat 01.06, 13.23; Sun 01.39, 13.55

## Information

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